



Texas Department of Health Measles Advisory

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) is aware that Mexico is experiencing an outbreak of measles. At this time, there are no confirmed cases of measles in Texas. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notified TDH that two recent laboratory-confirmed cases occurred in the Mexico state of Coahuila in the cities of Acuña and Torreón. Acuña is across the border from Del Rio, Texas (Val Verde County). In 2003, 44 cases of measles were reported in Mexico and 64 cases were reported for the period of January through April 2004.

Due to the cases of measles in Mexico, TDH is sending this notice to physicians to be on the alert when seeing patients, especially persons who have traveled to Mexico, or their contacts. All physicians are reminded to ***immediately report*** any suspect cases of measles to the local public health department or TDH regional office.

General information on measles and vaccine recommendations are provided below:

Measles Information

- Highly contagious, airborne disease that is characterized by ***high fever, cough, runny nose, watery eyes and a flat, red rash.***
- Complications of measles can include ***diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, seizures, infections of the brain and nervous system.*** In rare cases, measles can cause death.
- One dose of measles vaccine provides protection against the disease in approximately 95% of children vaccinated.
- Children not adequately vaccinated against measles are at highest risk for infection.
- An individual who has been infected with measles has lifelong immunity against it and will not contract it again.
- Measles has an incubation period of 7-21 days and infected people are considered contagious from 4 days before to 4 days after the appearance of rash.
- Serologic (Measles IgM) testing is required to confirm the diagnosis. In addition to serologic specimens, programs should collect throat swabs or urine for viral isolation.

Vaccination Recommendations for Measles

- Physicians should follow the recommended immunization schedule for measles.
 - Children should receive two doses of measles vaccine, the first administered at 12-15 months of age and the second administered at 4-6 years of age.
 - Adults born in 1957 or after, should receive two doses of measles vaccine unless they have evidence of immunity to the disease. Measles vaccination is not recommended for persons born before 1957.
- All travelers to Mexico should be fully vaccinated against measles as recommended for international travel.
 - Infants 6-11 months of age should receive one dose of measles vaccine before departure and then they should receive the vaccine at 12-15 months of age and again at 4-6 years of age.
 - Children 12-15 months of age should receive two doses of measles vaccine before departure, provided that the interval between doses is 28 days or more.
 - Adults should be vaccinated according to the recommended immunization schedule.

For more information, please contact Rita Espinoza, M.P.H., Epidemiologist, TDH Immunization Division, at (512) 458-7111, ext. 6634, or visit our web site at www.ImmunizeTexas.com.